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RUEKJCS/JOINT STAFF WASHINGTON DC PRIORITY  
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SENSITIVE  
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DEPT FOR SCA/FO, SCA/A  
NSC FOR JWOOD  
OSD FOR SHIVERS  
CG CJTF-101, POLAD, JICCENT

E.O. 12958: N/A  
TAGS: [PGOV](#) [MOPS](#) [PTER](#) [AF](#)  
SUBJECT: UNITED FRONT: DIVIDED BY RECONCILIATION

REF: KABUL 878

[¶1.](#) (SBU) The opposition United Front political bloc's April 8 conference on insurgent reconciliation provoked considerable internal debate. Party chairman Burhanuddin Rabbani reaffirmed his willingness to negotiate with the Taliban (reftel). Identifying reconciliation as a national priority, he urged insurgent leaders to abandon violence and enter into talks with either the government or United Front.

[¶2.](#) (SBU) In contrast, Abdul Hamid Mubariz, a United Front supporter and head of the Journalists Union, described efforts to reconcile the Taliban as futile so long as they remain militarily strong and have recourse to Pakistani safe havens and support. Reconciliation now, he implied, would require capitulation to the Taliban. Political Analyst Ahmad Saidi agreed, criticizing Karzai and ISAF for not taking the war to Taliban sanctuaries in Pakistan. Two female United Front activists, Shukria Haidary and National Assembly MP Qadria Yazdan Parast, vehemently argued that the Taliban are beyond redemption because of the crimes they committed against women while in power.

[¶3.](#) (SBU) Rabbani likely adopted his recent high profile on reconciliation hoping it would advance his undeclared 2009 presidential race ambitions. His overture to the Taliban might attract a trickle of Pashtun support. It does usefully serve to remind Afghans of Karzai's failure to reconcile any insurgent of note. Ironically, Rabbani's ploy has also provoked fundamental division among his disparate supporters and highlighted the fragility of his own political bloc.

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